



THE LEADER

Vol. 38, No. 50

Grand Forks Air Force Base, N.D. ♦ www.grandforks.af.mil

Dec. 19, 2003

Looking back



Reflecting on ups, downs of 2003

– See Pages 12-13

319th Air Refueling Wing ♦ Winners of the Air Force Outstanding Unit Award (July 2000 to June 2002)

Inside:

Weekend weather

Today	09/00	Partly Cloudy
Saturday	21/10	Snow
Sunday	24/15	Flurries
Monday	27/11	Snow



Weather information courtesy
www.weatherchannel.com

Driving ahead



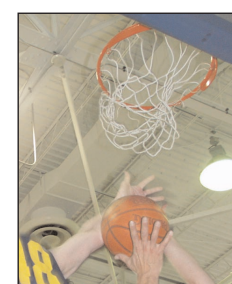
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A STEP ahead



Page 10

Hoop it up



Page 17

Commander reviews 2003

By Col. Mark Ramsay
Wing commander

By any measure of merit, 2003 was a tremendously successful year for all Warriors of the North!

From Afghanistan to Iraq, and almost every other corner of the globe including our own hometown, we've carried out our air mobility and combat support mission to near perfection.

We helped fight and win our nation's second major conflict against a brutal regime in as many years. Just this past week, the coalition took another major step toward the establishment of a peaceful and free Iraq when they captured Saddam Hussein without firing a shot.

Back at home station, we watered the eyes of no less than six higher headquarters inspection teams while making major strides in our programs and projects to help our military members and families.

Make no mistake; we're winning the global war against terrorism, and the Warriors of the North are integral to success.

The first few months of 2003 were marked by the build up, deployment, execution and redeployment of Team Grand Forks members supporting the removal of the Saddam Hussein regime from power. At the peak of Operation Iraqi Freedom, over 1,300 Warriors of the North were deployed. Over the course of 2003, we deployed 3,600 troops for 140,000 days to dozens of sites – principally in Southwest Asia.

Grand Forks airmen safely flew 26 percent of all KC-135 flying hours with only

21 percent of Air Force KC-135R/Ts. In OIF alone, the Warriors of the North flew over 1,300 combat sorties off-loading critical fuel to over 8,400 coalition aircraft while achieving a 99 percent mission effectiveness rate.

Our list of "firsts" is also remarkable. We were the first and lead wing to deploy 12 multi-point refueling system equipped aircraft into combat operations. Due to this unique capability, Grand Forks tankers provided flawless and sole refueling support to two Navy carrier battle groups and other coalition aircraft during OIF.

We were also the first and lead Air Force wing to deploy the developmental roll-on-beyond-line-of-sight enhancement package in combat, allowing combat aircraft to have a clearer and more up-to-date, three-dimensional picture of hostile battle space.

We employed this equipment 18 months ahead of schedule, prompting our Secretary of the Air Force to state, "This is terrific... well done by all!"

Grand Forks tankers were also selected to refuel F-117 stealth fighters on the first night of OIF operations, allowing precision strikes in downtown Baghdad shown live on CNN.

Finally, we were the first Air Mobility Command wing to achieve full operational capability with the new joint lightweight chemical warfare equipment.

On the homefront, from March to September, our wing aaced six higher headquarters

– See COMMANDER, Page 3

Action Line

The Action Line is your avenue for information about events and activities on and around the base.

For questions about current events or rumors, call 747-4522 and leave a message.

Questions will be answered in the order they are received.



Col. Mark Ramsay
319th Air Refueling Wing
commander

Town Hall meeting answers

Q: *Why is it the family who calls in to complain about a neighbor is the same family who must move to get away from that neighbor's disruptions, rather than having something done to correct the problems caused by that neighbor?*

A: It is not our policy to move families because of neighbor issues. If the neighbors are unable to resolve the complaint, it is referred to the chain of command to resolve within the squadron, if at all possible.

Q: *How come one household gets away with parking three vehicles on the street while another household doesn't get a guaranteed single parking space?*

A: The garage is your primary source for parking. Additional parking is provided on a first-come basis on the street and common area. We are working toward resolving the congested parking in family housing. In the future, two car garages are being included in housing.

12

Consecutive
DWI-free days

95%

Mission
effectiveness rating



Photo, graphics by Staff Sgt. Jason Gamble and
Senior Airman Joshua G. Moshier

Cover photo
Master Sgt. Geoffrey Bengtson looks at his reflection. Soon, 2003 will be a reflection for everyone.

Editorial staff

Col. Mark Ramsay	Wing commander
Capt. Patricia Lang	Chief, public affairs
2nd Lt. Ashley Gee	Chief, internal information
Master Sgt. Scott Davis	NCOIC, public affairs
Senior Airman Joshua Moshier	Managing editor
Airman Patrice Clarke	Staff writer

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– **COMMANDER, from Page 2**

inspections. These inspections included an AMC Unit Compliance Inspection, Environmental Compliance Assessment and Management Program evaluation with 19 “best practices,” Operation Plan 8044 Operational Readiness Inspection, and an Air Traffic Services Evaluation.

We were the only wing to complete an OPlan 8044 inspection without a single aircrew member or command post controller test failure!

We also completed a 15th Air Force Aircrew Standardization and Evaluation Visit and an inspection by Russian nuclear experts as part of the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty.

We executed all of these inspections in an outstanding or excellent manner with many “best seen to date” and “best in AMC” accolades.

Thanks to our wonderful Grand Forks community and Air Force funding, we continue to improve

our quality of life.

Operation Enduring Friendship was launched Aug. 24, and since this date, our military members and families have taken advantage of well over \$110,000 in free tickets to arts, cultural and sporting events in the greater Grand Forks area.

The annual Maury Rothkopf Military Appreciation Day on Nov. 1 again drew over 1,000 people to a great community event and football game.

I want to extend a special thanks to our troops who braved the cold and snow to show our community a small glimpse of our equipment, capabilities and knowledge in return for their generosity.

Thanks to our community and many base members, we opened the Warrior Airmen Recreation Center on Dec. 4.

This center is modeled after facilities offered to our airmen at deployed locations, and provides a place close to the dorms to relax and entertain.

Finally, we have numerous

base improvement projects ongoing including a new commissary, base exchange interior facelift, 318 new family houses with two car garages, and the addition of a J.R. Rockers Sports Café.

Throughout 2003, we’ve been blessed by the support of our families and community. I know I am strengthened greatly by my family and the support from our greater Grand Forks community.

I’m sure you’ll agree we couldn’t have achieved our great success in 2003 without this support.

Take the time over the upcoming holiday season to say thanks to family and friends, reflect on our amazing accomplishments in 2003, and look forward to what will hopefully be a more peaceful and predictable 2004.

On behalf of all Americans, I want to thank you with all my heart for what you do each and every day to protect our freedom.

Have a very safe holiday season, and I’ll see all of you again soon in 2004!

CMSAF sends holiday greeting

By Chief Master Sgt. Gerald R. Murray

Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force

To our airmen stationed at home and abroad and their families – Sherry and I send our warmest wishes to you this holiday season.

It is an honor for us to serve in our United States Air Force with each of you.

The holidays bring to mind families gathered around tables stuffed with food and children opening gifts while parents look on.

We know deployments will cause many military families to have an empty seat at the table this year.

If you are one of those families, please know your sacrifice does not go unnoticed. It’s because of you and fellow airmen, soldiers, sailors, Marines and Coastguardsmen that Americans can gather, worship and celebrate in freedom.

As we celebrate this holiday season and prepare to usher in a new year, Sherry and I thank you for your continued dedication and commitment.

May God richly bless you, your family and our great nation.

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News Briefs

Construction of mass mobility parking lot

The base has proposed the construction of a mass mobility parking lot.

An environmental assessment has been conducted, and a finding of “no significant impact” has been determined for the action.

Anyone who would like to view the support documents to this action should contact the 319th Air Refueling Wing public affairs office within the next 30 days at 747-5017.

Construction of recreation area

The base has proposed the construction of a miscellaneous services recreation area.

An environmental assessment has been conducted, and a finding of “no significant impact” has been determined for the action.

Anyone who would like to view the support documents to this action should

contact the 319th Air Refueling Wing public affairs office within the next 30 days at 747-5017.

Blood, Bone Marrow Drive

There will be a blood, bone marrow drive Jan. 21 and 22.

Information about donating is available through many sources.

Qualification information, as well as squadron representatives, are listed on the W3 in the “What’s Hot” section.

As a bonus, all individuals who attempt to donate for either program will eligible for the drawing of an official Minnesota Vikings jersey with signatures from four players.

Visit the W3 and get the details.

The DAK-MIN Blood Bank prefers to have donors pre-register in order to plan their days. However, they will accept walk-ins. Walk-ins must be prepared to wait.

For details, call 1st Lt. Edward Bunce at 747-4585.

Thrift Shop

The Thrift Shop is having a half-price sale on all thrift clothing for the month of December.

Busing Concerns

All comments or concerns about Twining or Eielson school busing can be directed to Mr. Ed Vida, BMAR Bus Project Manager, at 594-5480.

If you feel that your situation was not resolved to your satisfaction, call Master Sgt. Donald Sandbothe, Quality Assurance, at 747-4565.

Base member selected for OTS

Master Sgt. Michael Whitmore, 319th Maintenance Squadron, was selected for Officer Training School.

Presidential primary elections

The District of Columbia Presidential primary election is scheduled for Jan.

13, and the New Hampshire Presidential primary is scheduled for Jan. 27.

For details, contact your unit voting assistance counselor, or Maj. Robin White-Reed at 747-5373 or via email at robin.white-reed@grandforks.af.mil.

Christmas Dinner at the WAR Center

The Airmen’s Activity Council is hosting Christmas Dinner at the Warrior Airmen Recreation Center.

All airmen are invited to attend. The dinner starts at 6 p.m.

The snack bar will not be open.

For details, contact the WAR Center at 747-5733, or an AAC representative

Next *The Leader* Issue

The next issue of *The Leader* will be Jan. 9, 2004.

The Leader is accepting submissions for that issue until Jan. 5, 2004.

The Leader staff wishes Happy Holidays to all.

Conrad tours new housing units at base

By Kris Jensen

Grand Forks Herald staff writer

North Dakota Sen. Kent Conrad donned a hardhat and toured new housing construction Dec. 3 as he handed over a huge cardboard check for \$56.8 million to the base.

The money – allocated from fiscal year 2004 – will provide \$29.6 million for new family housing on base and \$27.2 million for infrastructure and repairs.

Many of the 1,489 housing units on the base were built in the 1950s and 60s, and some of them are six-plexes.

Since then, the Air Force standard has changed to duplexes. Sen. Conrad had just toured one of those units before seeing one of the new homes, designed and

built by Phoenix-based Sundt Construction.

“I was just in the ‘before’ unit, and compared to what this is going to be, it’s extraordinary,” the senator told construction workers and base officials.

Homes such as the one Sen. Conrad toured will house senior non-commissioned officers and lower-level officers.

Sen. Conrad turned to Sundt worker Mr. Mike Mahoney to ask the square footage.

“This one’s 2,400,” Mr. Mahoney said.

Sen. Conrad said housing such as the new units is long overdue and well deserved.

Job well done

Sen. Conrad tipped his hat to 319th Air Refueling Wing Commander Col. Mark Ramsay.

“Colonel Ramsay and his team have been superb,”

Sen. Conrad said. “The way they’ve carried out these projects is exceptional. You can’t come out here and not see the improvements. His leadership is evident in every corner of this base.”

“This is the crown jewel of the Air Mobility Command, one of the core tanker bases, and it couldn’t have happened without the people who put their shoulder to the wheel. There are going to be families living here,” he said, gesturing around the open stud walls. “They will enjoy the fruits of your labor.”

Sen. Conrad presented certificates of appreciation to Strata general manager Mr. Steve Griffin and Mr. Scott Smith, project manager for Sundt. It was the first time Mr. Smith’s work was inspected by a U.S. senator.

“I’ve had lots of military brass come through, but never a senator.”

Filling the shelves

By Airman Patrice Clarke
Public affairs

When it comes to helping airmen, it doesn't matter who you are. The Twining Middle Schools student council proved this the last two weeks when they held a food drive for the family support center and collected more than 700 perishable items.

"We had a dance in October and collected a few perishable items," said Mrs. Judy Morin, a foreign language teacher at Twining and student council advisor.

"When we went over to the FSC to drop off the goods, we noticed how empty the shelves were," said

Jeanine DiMaio, student council member.

Due to the frequent deployments there, is a larger need to keep the family support center stocked for the families who are home.

"We decided to do a bigger food drive to help them out," Mrs. Morin said.

The students made posters and advertised in their school's "purple papers," or school bulletins.

"The first couple of days were our biggest collection days," said Kirsten Hampl, student council member.

Not only did the students ask their peers and school faculty, they also called grocery stores in Grand Forks for support.



Photos by Airman Patrice Clarke

(Top) Jennifer Ramsay and Danielle Richter, members of the Twining Middle School's student council, go to classrooms around the school collecting perishable donations.

(Left) Kirsten Hampl and Erica Plets, members of the Twining Middle School student council, help color the posters marking how many perishable items each grade in the school has collected.



Base theater



Today, 7 p.m.

***The Matrix
Revolutions (R)***

The concluding chapter of the Matrix trilogy finds Neo (Keanu Reeves) trapped between the real world and the computer-generated Matrix. After being rescued by Trinity (Carrie-Anne Moss) and Morpheus (Laurence Fishburne), he consults the Oracle and sets off to confront his nemesis, Agent Smith.

Saturday, 3 p.m.

Elf (PG)

After crawling into Santa’s bag of toys when he was a baby, Buddy (Will Ferrell) wound up at the North Pole and spent his entire life raised by elves. But Buddy grows three times bigger than all the others and eventually sets off for New York City in search of his biological father (James Caan).

Saturday, 7 p.m.

The Matrix Revolutions (R)

Dec. 24, 2 p.m.

Elf (PG)

Dec. 26, 7 p.m.

Radio (PG)

Radio tells the true story of the unusual friendship between Harold Jones (Ed Harris), a white football coach at a South Carolina high school, and a mentally challenged African-American man nicknamed Radio (Cuba Gooding Jr.).

Dec. 27, 3 p.m.

Looney Toons: Back In Action (PG)

A fired stuntman (Brendan Fraser) teams up with disgruntled Daffy Duck – he felt Bugs Bunny got all the attention, and thus left the Warner Bros. lot – and the two head for Las Vegas and Africa where they search for Fraser’s father and the mythical Blue Diamond. A studio executive (Jenna Elfman) and Bugs Bunny are in hot pursuit trying to get Daffy to return to Hollywood.

Dec. 27, 7 p.m.

Love Actually (R)

Set in modern-day London, the story interweaves 10 romantic love stories. Hugh Grant plays the newly elected British prime minister, a bachelor who falls for a young tea girl (Martine McCutcheon) on his first day in office.

Jan. 2, 2004, 7 p.m.

***Master and Commander: The Far Side
of the World (PG-13)***

Jan. 3, 2004, 3 p.m.

Dr. Seuss’ The Cat in the Hat (PG)

Jan. 3, 2004, 7 p.m.

The Missing (R)

Jan. 4, 2004, 3 p.m.

Dr. Seuss’ The Cat in Hat (PG)

Tickets: \$1.50 children, \$3 adults
For details, call 747-3021/6123.

Base chapel

CATHOLIC:

Mass: 9 a.m. Sunday, Sunflower Chapel.

Weekday Mass: Meets again Jan. 5, Sunflower Chapel.

Reconciliation: 8:30 to 8:45 a.m. Sunday, or by appointment, Sunflower Chapel.

CCD: Meets again Jan. 11.

Adult education, sacramental programs:

Call Mrs. Jane Hutzol at 747-3073.

Advent Penance Service: 7 p.m. Thursday, Sunflower Chapel.

Children’s Christmas Mass: 5 p.m. Wednesday, Sunflower Chapel.

Midnight Mass: Midnight Thursday, Sunflower Chapel.

Christmas Day Mass: 9 a.m. Thursday, Sunflower Chapel.

New Year’s Eve Mass: 10 a.m. Jan. 1, Sunflower Chapel.

Epiphany of the Lord: 9 a.m. Jan. 4, Sunflower Chapel.

PROTESTANT:

Traditional worship: 10:30 a.m. Sunday, Sunflower Chapel.

Contemporary worship: 6 p.m. Sunday, Prairie Rose Chapel.

Sunday School: Meets again Jan. 4.

Protestant youth of the chapel: Meets again Jan. 4.

Men of the Chapel Bible study: Meet again Jan. 5.

Young adults: Meets again Jan. 6. Call 747-6468.

Candlelight Service: 7 p.m. Thursday, Sunflower Chapel.

New Year’s Eve Fellowship: 8:30 p.m. Dec. 31, Turtle River State Park.

RUSSIAN/EASTERN ORTHODOX:

Call Dr. Levitov at 780-6540.

MUSLIM, BUDDHIST, OTHER:

For details, call 747-5673.

JEWISH:

Call Synagogue B’nai Israel at 775-5124.

Base garbage contractor changes

By Master Sgt. Scott Nichols
319th Civil Engineer Squadron

A new base refuse contract will cause changes in how the housing and industrial sides of base refuse and recycling will be managed and picked up.

Military family housing

In military family housing, this new contract authorized issue of a rolling 95-gallon trash receptacle, similar to the green recycling receptacles, to each housing unit. Housing occupants will be required to roll the trash receptacle next to the curb in front of their unit adjacent to the recycling receptacle no later than 7:45 a.m. on the pick-up day designated for their area.

The only exception is the Sunflake housing units which will still have trash and recyclables picked up in the garages. All trash must be in plastic bags and placed in the receptacle.

The new refuse vehicles are equipped with mechanical dumping devices which require containers to be placed close to the curb (not in the street) with a two-foot space between containers and away from other obstacles.

Ensure any snow banks are removed and a level area is provided for the receptacles along the curb.

People must ensure receptacles are not placed where they may cause problems for privately owned vehicles accessing the driveway.

The receptacles can not stay on the curb all week long. They must be stored in accordance with housing regulations. The pick-up day will remain the same as in the past set for the housing area.

No more heavy metal

The refuse contractor will no longer pick up trash by the garages. The old, heavy, metal government trash receptacles will no longer be used.

On Monday and Dec. 26, residents may dispose of the empty metal containers by placing them on the curb. If residents choose not to dispose of these containers, they become the property of that resident, and it is his responsibility to

relocate the container upon moving out of housing.

Residents with privately owned trash receptacles may dispose of them in the same manner. Movable, white three-foot wood fence enclosures may also be disposed of if they are no longer needed. The fence must be broken apart into manageable sizes and placed on the curb on the large trash and compost pick-up day Mondays or Fridays.

If a resident's trash will not fit in one 95-gallon receptacle, call the QAE to see if they can provide an additional one.

Hazardous items

Some items will not be picked up by the contractor since they are classified as hazardous or can not be placed in the landfill.

Automotive batteries, automotive oil and automotive anti-freeze can be disposed of at the auto hobby shop. Automotive tires can be disposed of at the shoppette for \$1.50 per tire. Fluorescent light bulbs, paint products and cleaning supplies can be disposed of at the self-help store.

Industrial area

For the industrial side, all dumpster pick-ups around your work center will remain the same. If the dumpster exceeds 75 percent capacity, the contractor is required to empty it.

If a work center dumpster is over 75 percent full, call the quality assurance evaluator at 747-4021.

The industrial side recycle center is open seven-days-a-week from 7:45 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and is located at Building 424 in the old Defense Reutilization and Marketing Office lot.

For special dumpster support, such as renovations and projects that generate a lot of trash, organizations can call the QAE.

The contractor has 24 hours from notification on special support to deliver or empty the dumpster, so plan ahead.

For details about the refuse and recycle contract, call Tech. Sgt. Neil Gereau at 747-4021, or Waste Management's customer service number at 775-5880.

World War II vet receives Purple Heart after 60 years

By Staff Sgt. Randy Redman
6th Air Mobility Wing public affairs

MACDILL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. – His bomber formation was the first to arrive on target and was heavily engaged by flack and fighter aircraft.

“All the other planes had been called back due to bad weather,” said retired Staff Sgt. Robert D. Stewart. “But we had a one star (general) who said we were going for it.”

When enemy fire tore apart the B-17’s number one engine, Sgt. Stewart and other crew members were forced to bail out of the plane. The injuries he sustained from the 20 mm shell fragments were just the beginning of his troubles that bleak winter day nearly 60 years ago.

“I landed in a creek and lost one of my sheepskin boots,” Sgt. Stewart said. “Snow was covering me up to my waist when I finally just hid under a pine tree.”

He was captured by the Germans and placed in a cell underneath an old barn. Since he was denied access to medical supplies, he was forced to use his own first aid kit to remove the shrapnel himself.

Sgt. Stewart was recently approved to receive the Purple Heart medal for injuries sustained as the left

waist gunner and medic on a B-17 “Flying Fortress” during a bombing raid over Germany on Jan. 11, 1944.

Over the past few years, the Air Force Personnel Center has processed numerous awards earned during World War II and the Korean and Vietnam wars.

For the newly approved awards, AFPC forwards the decoration to the nearest military installation, which offers the recipient an opportunity for a formal presentation.

Because Sgt. Stewart now resides in Bradenton, Fla., MacDill Air Force Base was selected to present him with the Purple Heart, the oldest U.S. military decoration still in use and the first American award made available to the common soldier.

The Purple Heart is awarded to members of the armed forces of the U.S. who are wounded by an instrument of war in the hands of the enemy and posthumously to the next of kin in the name of those who are killed in action or die of wounds received in action. It is specifically a combat decoration.

The Purple Heart was initially created as the Badge of Military Merit by Gen. George Washington. His appreciation of the importance of the soldier in any endeavor compelled him to recognize outstanding valor and merit in deserving individuals.

Sgt. Stewart gratefully accepted his long-awaited medal from Col. David Snyder, 6th Air Mobility Wing commander, in a special ceremony at wing headquarters Dec. 9.

“I’m sorry it took so long for the nation to recognize your service,” said Col. Snyder. “But we want to be sure that your sacrifices will never be forgotten.”

When he was finally rescued and returned to the United States, the only thing on Sgt. Stewart’s mind was returning home to be with his family.

“When they asked him at the out-processing station if he had been wounded, he told them no so he could just come home,” said Mrs. Genevieve Stewart, his wife, who attended the ceremony along with several other members of their family.

That “white lie” made it nearly impossible for Sgt. Stewart to receive a medal no one could deny he earned. Even today, he still carries shell fragments he was unable to remove. The Board of Correction of Military Records at AFPC required multiple documents and testimonies from people who knew Sgt. Stewart and were familiar with the events in 1944 in order to award him the Purple Heart. One of those testimonies came from Mr. James Baker, a prisoner with Stewart in Germany, who also attended the ceremony.

STEP^{up}



Photos by Staff Sgt. Jason Gamble

Col. Mark Ramsay, wing commandar, and Chief Master Sgt. Danny Holwerda, wing command chief, promoted three base members this week through the Stripes To Exceptional Performers program. (Above) Tech. Sgt. Chistopher Fowler, 319 Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, and (bottom right) Tech Sgt. Damian Tatro, 319 Medical Support Squadron received their promotions early Wednesday morning. (Top right) Master Sgt. Ken Clere, 319th Air Refueling Wing, received his extra stripe Tuesday.



Reflecting on the year gone by 2003

By Senior Airman Joshua G. Moshier
Public affairs

My, how time flies.

The year has come and is now almost gone, and the world and base are decidedly different places. The base specifically had its share of success, sadness, things to build on, and things to learn from.

Here is *The Leader's* 2003 year in review:

Jan. 3 – Dedication of 2nd Lt. Holly Adams Conference Room – Life is a fragile thing, and that truth made itself known to the base with the passing of 2nd Lt. Holly Adams in a Dec. 18, 2002, vehicle accident. Lt. Adams had been assigned to the base for less than six months, yet left her mark on base and with those she worked with. She was remembered by friends, family and her Air Force family as a gentle, kind and loving person with a zest for life.

“Lieutenant Adams made coming to work fun every day,” said Senior Airman Jessica Towry-Shumaker, who worked in the 319th Mission Support Squadron orderly room with her. “She was a first-class officer.”

Lt. Adams made such an impact on base and her co-workers, her memory was honored with the dedication of the 2nd Lt. Holly Adams Conference Room in Building 101 on base Jan. 3.

“The Lord gave us this special gift and allowed her to grace us with her presence for five-and-a-half months,” said Lt. Col. Victoria Bowens, 319th MSS commander, on the day of the dedication, “and on Dec. 18, 2002, he called her home and said, ‘Daughter, well done.’

“She will never be forgotten.”

Jan. 31 – Captains Dave Pratt, Brandt House and Senior Airman Caleb Ramsey receive Distinguished Flying Cross – There have been many stories of heroism since the terrorist attacks of Sept. 11, 2001, and three Warriors were honored for theirs Jan. 28.

Capt. Dave Pratt, 906th Air Refueling Squadron pilot, Capt. Brandt House, 906th ARS co-pilot, and Senior Airman Caleb Ramsey, 906th ARS boom operator, were presented with the Distinguished Flying Cross for their efforts on Oct. 7, 2001, as part of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Shortly after take-off on an overseas refueling mission, the KC-135 crew lost air speed, altitude and vertical velocity indicators. Despite being placed in a tenuous situation, and with the help of another crew from Grand Forks Air Force Base, Capt. Al Pichon, 911th ARS pilot, 1st Lt. Robert Slanger, 911th ARW co-pilot, and Staff Sgt. Max Morkin, 911th ARS boom operator, the crew pressed on and successfully completed its refueling mission.

“It was crucial for us to go and finish our mission, because those receivers needed their fuel,” Airman Ramsey said.

Feb. 10 – Fifty-two North Dakota Army National Guard soldiers arrive to augment base security – Deployments, temporary duty assignments and looming military action in the Middle East left the 319th Security Forces Squadron facing a numbers crunch. Specifically, there weren't enough people to perform all the security functions on the base.

The problem was quickly resolved as 52 soldiers from the North Dakota Army National Guard's 141st Engineer Combat Battalion and arrived on base Feb. 10 to augment base security forces.

“This is a show of ‘joint forces,’” said (Army) 1st Lt. Shawn Klemmer, platoon leader. “This is something that is becoming more prevalent in the military. I think in a situation like this, where we use each other's assets, it makes us a much stronger force.”

Feb. 18 – Grand Forks Air Force Base helps Dover AFB battle record snowfall – Thirty-one inches of snowfall is more than enough to build a snowman or two. It's also the type of snowfall that can disable an Air Force base's ability to operate.

Over the President's Day holiday this year, Dover Air Force Base found out first-hand how nasty that much snow could be. Shoveling 31 inches of snow by hand would be practically impossible. However, Grand Forks AFB was quick to the rescue.

After clearing the runway enough to allow aircraft to land, two C-5s delivered a snowplow, two snow blowers and four front-end loaders from here to help lighten the load.

“It was an excellent demonstration of the flexibility of airpower,” said Col. Barbara Chine, 319th Mission Support Group commander. “Team Grand Forks for its quick response time to help, and Team Dover for keeping its mission going despite the record snowfall.”

March 19 – Operations to disarm Iraq begin – The deadline for former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein to disarm had passed, and coalition forces from 35 nations began striking Iraqi targets.

“On my orders, coalition forces have begun striking selected targets of military importance to undermine Saddam Hussein's ability to wage war,” said President George W. Bush. “Every nation in this coalition has chosen to bear the duty and share the honor of sharing in our common defense.”

To more than 250,000 United States service members, the President said, “The peace of a troubled world and the hopes of an oppressed people now depend on you.”

April 8 – Destruction of Cold War remnant begins – The former 321st Missile Wing headquarters (Building 306) stood on base since May 15, 1958. Known affectionately on base as “the big block building,” it was home to the Semi-Automatic Ground Environmental system, which was a series of radar and computer systems networked together to provide look-out protection from a surprise attack. The building was most recently home to several 319th Air Refueling Wing staff agency offices.

“The building was one of the last testaments to the history of the missiles we had at this base,” said retired Master Sgt. James Bolton, current treaty compliance office chief and former 321st MW member who first arrived at Grand Forks Air Force Base in 1991. “It is good to know we no longer need the missiles or that building. It was tough to see it go, but it had to go so we could progress.”

May 8 – Commissary construction begins – Construction for a new \$12.5 million commissary on base began with the official ground-breaking ceremony for the new store.

With a planned completion date of fall 2004, the new building will feature more than 49,000 square feet of space and will replace the current commissary, which was originally built in 1960 – more than 43 years ago.

“We're excited as a community to have construction start on this facility,” said Col. Steve Wayne, 319th Air Refueling Wing vice commander. “In the weeks and months ahead, we will have a brand-new quality facility that will rise to the standards of our other new facilities on base. This is a big quality-of-life issue for our people here.”

May 22 – Base airman found dead in his apartment – Senior Airman Thomas Burchfield is found dead in his apartment by Grand Forks police officers. Airman Burchfield is the first of three base members to die in a three-month span.

May 28 – Base, community unveil Operation Enduring Friendship – As anyone who has served in the Air Force knows, the success of any mission can not be complete without a strong relationship and support from its surrounding community.

Grand Forks and the Air Force have had a traditionally strong relationship, and the unveiling of Operation Enduring Friendship – a program that grants active duty military, full-time Guardsmen and Reservists, and their families free admittance to most University of North Dakota sporting events and cultural arts activities in the surrounding area – only figured to make that relationship stronger.

“Operation Enduring Friendship is an opportunity to invite members of the 319th Air Refueling Wing to come out to our backyard and enjoy the wonderful community we share,” said Mr. Phil Harmeson, UND vice president and honorary commander. “It's our way of saying, ‘thank you,’ and showing our appreciation to the men and women who defend our nation's freedom year-round.”

June 4 – End of an era – A demolition project that began April 8 ended June 4 when the last wall of the “big block building” fell.

July 24 – Grand Forks loses another airman – The death of Airman 1st Class Alexander Folgar of the 319th Maintenance Squadron on July 24 is the base's second loss of life this summer.

Aug. 2 – Third airman in as many months dies – Senior Airman Ronnie Golden, 319th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, dies in his base dormitory of a gunshot wound. His death was the third during a tragic summer on base.

Aug. 17 through 22 – Base shines during Operational Readiness Inspection – The 319th Air Refueling Wing scored an overall “excellent” during the base-wide Operational Readiness Inspection.

In addition to the overall “excellent,” defensive counter-information, and communications and information scored “outstandings.”

Sept. 3 – Colonel Ramsay assumes command of the 319th Air Refueling Wing – Amidst a sea of green and blue, Col. Mark Ramsay assumed control of the 319th Air Refueling Wing from Col. Keye Sabol Sept. 3 during a ceremony presided over by Maj. Gen. John Becker, 15th Air Force commander.

“Together, we will build on our excellent mission readiness and become broader expeditionary air mobility and combat support experts to handle any future national security challenge,” Col. Ramsay said following the ceremony.

Sept. 17 – Grand Forks Air Force Base comes to the aid of another Air Force unit – In February, it was a massive snowstorm. In September, it was Hurricane Isabel. Both times, Grand Forks Air Force Base was ready and willing to help another base overcome Mother Nature.

McGuire AFB, N.J., evacuated three C-141B

Starlifters to Grand Forks as they prepared for the onslaught of Isabel.

“The relocation went according to plan, and all of our aircraft got out before the high winds could cause any damage to them,” said Lt. Col. Eric Wydra, 6th Airlift Squadron commander. “The men and women at Grand Forks Air Force Base ensured all else went smoothly with the mission, making our job easy.”

Oct. 1 – Eighteenth Air Force activated – Air Mobility Command is reorganized. The 15th Air Force and 21st Air Force is gone and is replaced by the 18th Air Force.

Oct. 9 – Million Minute March reaches its goal – Nearly \$10,000 in phone cards were delivered to the family support center Oct. 9 pushing the Million Minute March past its goal.

The goal was to purchase 10,000 long-distance calling cards of 100 minutes each.

“This program helped our deployed families when they needed it most,” said Tech. Sgt. Michael Johnson, FSC.

Dec. 4 – WAR Center opens its doors for first time – The Warrior Airmen Recreation Center opened its doors Dec. 4. The WAR Center was created for senior airmen and below and features two pool tables, an air hockey table, snack bar, movie room, and a computer and game room.

Saturday – Saddam Hussein captured by American forces – The work is not finished, but the United States scored a symbolic blow to guerrilla resistance in Iraq with the capture of former Iraqi President Saddam Hussein Saturday.

“I'm very happy the coalition has captured Saddam Hussein,” said Col. Mark Ramsay, 319th Air Refueling Wing commander. “This is one more step toward bringing peace and democracy to the Middle East.”



File photo

The base saw its fair share of deployments in 2003, and an equally fair share of emotional reunions with loved ones.

Community

Finishing touches

Staff Sgt. Willis Blevins, 319th Aircraft Maintenance Squadron, and son Kenneth put the finishing touches on their gingerbread house.

The third graders spent part of tuesday afternoon making holiday gingerbread houses at Carl Ben Eielson Elementary school.



Photo by Airman Patrice Clarke

Today

PASTA BAR: The Northern Lights Club offers a “pasta bar” along with the day’s hot entree during lunch from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m.

CLUB DINING: The Northern Lights Club offers sirloin steak as a special tonight from 5:30 to 8 p.m

GOLF COURSE BREAKFAST: The Plainsview Golf Course offers steak and egg day every Friday from 7 to 11 a.m.

Saturday

HOLIDAY BOWLING SPECIAL: The holiday bowling card can now be used. Bowl as many games between today and Dec. 31. Come by Dakota Bowling Center and and purchase the card for \$15, not valid for Bowl by Mail.

CLUB KARAOKE: The Northern Lights Club offers karaoke from 10 p.m. to 3 a.m.

CLUB DANCING: The Northern Lights Club offers dancing from 10 p.m. to 3 a.m. to ‘club mix’ music with “DJ ‘C.

Sunday

SUNDAY BRUNCH: The Northern Lights Club offers Sunday brunch from from 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

There is a \$3 members first discount.

FOOTBALL FRENZY: The Northern Lights Club invites everyone to watch football and win prizes.

Monday

GOLF COURSE LUNCH: The Plainsview Golf Course offers barbeque chicken with mashed potatoes and corn for lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

BOWL BY MAIL: Today is the last day to registrar for the 4th annual Air Force “Bowl by Mail” youth bowling tournament at Dakota Lanes Bowling center.

The tournament is for youth ages 5 to 18 who are authorized to use services facilities. The tournament starts Dec. 30 at 1 p.m.

Cost is \$5.

For details call Dakota Lanes at 747-3050.

FOOTBALL FRENZY: The Northern Lights Club invites everyone to watch football and win prizes.

Wednesday

HOLIDAY RENTAL SPECIAL: Outdoor recreation will be offering a special through Dec. 29 and Dec. 31 to Jan. 5, 2004 on the following items:

► Downhill ski package - \$25

► Cross-country ski package - \$12.50

► Snowboard - \$42.50

All rental packages need to be picked up by noon today and returned by 3 p.m. Dec. 29 and Jan. 5, 2004.

For details call outdoor recreation at 747-3688.

CLUB CLOSED: The Northern Lights Club will be closed today through Dec. 30 an Jan. 1-2, 2004 for the holidays.

Normal hours of operation will resume Jan. 3, 2004.

Upcoming

OPEN SWIM: Open swim times at the base pool during the holiday break are as

follows:

Dec. 22, 26, 29, 31 and Jan. 2, 2004 1 to 5 p.m.

Dec. 23, 30 1 to 5 p.m. and 6 to 9 p.m.

Dec. 24 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Dec. 27-28, and Jan. 3-4, 2004, 1 to 6 p.m.

For details call Outdoor recreation at 747-3688

OPEN SKATING: Bring a canned food item to Liberty Square Dec. 26 and receive \$1 off admission.

Food items will be donated to local food shelf.

FIRST NIGHT TRIP: The youth center will be taking a can downtown to the Grand Cities “First Night” activities Dec. 31.

A listing of events and times will be available at the youth center. First Night is a nonalcoholic New Year’s Eve celebration.

For youth ages nine and older, unless accompanied by a parent or guardian.

For details, contact the youth center at 747-3150.

TWELVE DAYS OF FITNESS: Register for the twelve days of fitness at the fitness center.

The program encourages patrons to try a variety of different exercises, have fun and stay fit during the holidays.

Only one workout per day counts.

Patrons must log at least 12 workouts of at least 30 minutes in duration each.

For details call the Fitness Center Staff at 747-3384/5.

Last week’s crossword solutions

The crossword will return in the next issue of *The Leader*.

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Photo by Airman Patrice Clarke

Dreams of 300

Master Sgt. Rob Pawlikowski, dorm manager, goes for a strike during the bowl-a-thon. The Dakota Lanes Bowling Center was home to the 3rd annual Top 3 Bowl-a-thon Dec. 12. Nineteen four-person teams raised over \$1,600 for Operation White Christmas which helps bring Christmas to families in need, on and off base.

Warriors shine at Comfort Inn tournament

Base 'ballers' take massive Williston State College to final minute

Compiled by staff reports

Area colleges beware: the base varsity men's basketball team is for real.

The Warriors were involved in a heavyweight battle with Williston State College Saturday at the Comfort Inn basketball tournament at Sports Center in Devils Lake.

Despite facing a Williston starting five with two players standing over six-feet, nine-inches tall (the Warriors' tallest player who dressed for the game was six-feet, two-inches tall), the Warriors gave the Tetons all they could handle.

Although the Warriors eventually fell 91-80 to the Tetons, the game wasn't decided until the final minute.

Forward Javron Rushing, back from a foot injury that had sidelined him for the first 10 games of the season, had a huge impact. Rushing scored 12 points and grabbed five rebounds to lead all Warrior forwards.

Forwards Derrick Jones, Jeffrey Felton, Tyrone Edwards and Melvyn Thompsom combined to play superb defense in the post.

The Warrior forwards gave up 26 points to six-foot, nine-inch power forward Marlon Bernard and 20 points to six-foot, 10-inch center Marlin Mulic, but none came easy.

"Our post did not give up anything," said Warriors head coach D.J. Lemelle. "We did a tremendous job boxing out and allowing our guards to get to the rebounds."

Warrior guard play was exceptional as well.

The Warriors' perimeter defense held the Tetons to three for 16 shooting from the three-point line.

George Fowlkes had a career day, scoring 28 points, but more importantly

grabbing 11 rebounds and seven steals. Russell Mackay continued his stellar play by chalking up 17 points and three steals.

Eric Williams, averaging 20 points a game, didn't approach his average with only eight points, but played shut-down defense on Williston guard Adam Ottmar, a Teton three-point specialist, holding him scoreless for the game. Williams also had five steals before fouling out.

"Overall, our guys played a hard-fought game," Lemelle said. "However, we are not satisfied. We had a few crucial turnovers at times when we were making runs, which slowed down our momentum. Also, our help defense fell apart with about five minutes to go in the game, which allowed their point guard to score on three uncontested lay-ups in a three-minute stretch.

"We played three minutes of bad defense that ultimately cost us a victory. We give up so much size in each game we play; even the simplest of mistakes are huge for us."

"In order for us to start putting up wins, we have to minimize our mental errors," Lemelle said.

Having Rushing shine in his first game against a strong team like Williston marks a potentially bright future for the Warriors.

Team captains Matt Wireman and Solutez Dukes, and starting guard O.J. Oden are out due to injuries.

Their return in early January will give the Warriors more court leadership, as well as a combined 48 points and 18 rebounds a game.

"As shown by our performance, our team is maturing quickly, and will battle until the clock hits zero," Lemelle said. "The team is playing with no fear, which makes us deadly."

The Warriors also opened up Devils Lake league play Sunday with an impressive 114-42 victory.

The team's next two games are at 1 and 3 p.m. Sunday at Central Middle School in Devils Lake.

LRS shoots down MDG, 43-35

Perimeter shooting, offensive rebounds spur team to old-pro league victory

By Senior Airman Joshua G. Moshier
Public affairs

The 319th Logistics Readiness Squadron upended the 319th Medical Group, 43-35, in intramural old-pro basketball action Tuesday at the base gym.



Photos by Senior Airman Joshua G. Moshier

LRS' Brian Merrill battles for a rebound during Tuesday's old-pro basketball action.

Despite the final margin, the game was a battle to the final minute. LRS used marksman-like accuracy from the outside and tenacious offensive rebounding to secure the victory.

MDG got things started on the right foot in the first half, knocking down three three-point field goals on their way to a 17-10 halftime lead. Lavory Sparks and Troy Hampton led the scoring for the medics with five points apiece.

LRS' Harry Walker kept his team within striking distance by knocking down two three-pointers for six first half points.

"Our game plan was to get a lead," Walker said, "but it obviously didn't happen that way. Going into the second half, we figured we were going to need to knock down some threes to give ourselves a chance to win."

That proved to be the recipe for success.

LRS began firing up threes practically every trip down the court, and those that didn't go in were often brought down by an LRS teammate for second-chance scoring opportunities. The sharp-

shooting and aggressive offensive rebounding by LRS helped to quickly erase the MDG advantage and give LRS their first lead of the game, 23-22.

The action went back and forth from there with LRS taking a 38-35 lead into the final minute. Clutch free throw shooting and a stifling defense put the game away.

"We're still trying to feel ourselves out," Walker said. "This is only our second game, and we haven't had a practice, so we're still getting used to one another. The good thing is, no one is afraid to take a shot."

LRS' Brian Merrill led all scorers with 14 points, including 10 in the second half.

Walker added 12 points on four three-pointers, and Jeff Bancroft chipped in nine points for LRS, all in the second half, on three three-pointers.

Hampton led MDG with 13 points in the game.



An LRS player puts up a shot over three MDG defenders Tuesday.